Special drive to clear the SC/ST/OBC backlog

129. SHRI MOHINDER SINGH KALYAN: Will the Minister of COAL be pleased to state:

(a) whether any special drive has been undertaken to clear the backlog of Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes and Backward Class in filling up of the different categories of posts in the Ministry of Coal; and

(b) if so, the details thereof, indicating the present backlog and the targets contemplated for the current year?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COAL (SHRIMATI KANTI SINGH): (a) and (b) In the Ministry of Coal, only one backlog vacancy in the post of an Assistant, belonging to the Scheduled Tribe category is to be filled up. The vacancy has already been intimated to the Department of Personnel and Training and will be filled up on recipt of nomination by them.

Coal mines in the country

130. SHRI MOHINDER SINGH KALYAN: Will the Minister of COAL be pleased to state:

(a) the number of coal mines functioning in the different parts of the country as on 31st January, 1997;

(b) the number of workers engaged therein coal mine-wise';

(c) incentives being provided by Government in these coal mines; and

(d) the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COAL (SHRIMATI KANTI SINGH): (a) The number of coal mines being operated by Coal India Limited (CIL) and Singareni Collieries Company Limited (SCCL) in defferent parts of the country as on 31.1.1997 are 502 and 71 respectively.

(b) The number of workers engaged in the coal mines of CIL and SCCL are 5,22,052 and 1,14,202 respectively. The minewise number of workers engaged in these mines is being collected.

(c) and (d) No incentive is being provided by Government in these coal mines. However, the coal companies provide various incentives for their workers according to their schemes and availability of funds.

Bids for new coal mining projects

131. SHRI KRISHNA KUMAR BIRLA: Will the Minister of COAL be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government propose to invite competitive bids from both the public and private sector for the country's new coal mining projects;

(b) if so, the decision taken by Government in this regard; and

(c) the incentives proposed to be given by Government to encourage the private sector to invest into the coal mining in the country?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COAL (SHRIMATI KANTI SINGH): (a) to (c) Subject to legislative changes, the Government have accepted the recommendation of the Committee on Integrated Coal Policy to offer new coal blocks, without any restriction on captive coal mining to Indian companies including public sector companies on the basis of competitive bids. The Government have also accepted the recommendation of the Committee that price of coal from new coal mining projects henceforth to be taken up, may be fixed on the basis of negotiations between the producer and the consumer. Prices of A, B, C and D grades of coal, soft and hard coke have already been deregulated. The prices of other grades of coal will be fixed twice a year upto 01.01.2000 according to BICP formula.